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DARLING AND SILCOX  
RALLY AUDUBON MEMBERS

Chiefs of Forest Service and Biological  
Survey Urge Conservationists  
to Unified Activity

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What the wildlife conservation agencies of the country need is a dose of the same tonic that the foresters took a generation ago, said J. N. Darling, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey Tuesday night in New York. He was addressing the 31st Annual Convention of the National Association of Audubon Societies on a program which also included F. A. Silcox, Chief of the Forest Service. Instead of a dozen or more agencies working ineffectively at cross purposes, said Darling, we need, as the foresters did, a strong and healthy, active federation that will formulate and carry out a national program of wildlife conservation.

We are starting out on a national program of wildlife conservation with a two-hundred-year handicap, Darling said, and if the birds and animals are going to be preserved outside of zoos and parks, the friends of wildlife had better get to work immediately, he declared.

So far, said Darling, most of those interested in the conservation of wildlife have been content to rest their case with memberships in local groups and societies. The teamsters' union is better organized to gain its ends, he said, than are the wildlife conservationists. Every other agency for the betterment of living is better organized than conservation, and the wildlife groups may as well be reconciled to organization and unified strength, or see their hopes vanish into thin air as they have for the last generation.

Mr. Silcox, reviewing briefly the waste and mismanagement of forest resources and the resulting destruction of wildlife said the birds and animals have "put up a gallant battle against overwhelming odds." He said: "On the 495 million acres of privately owned forest land, where exploitation has been virtually unrestrained, the number of game animals has decreased at an alarming rate. This is true on many Eastern National Forests, which in large measure comprise cut-over lands recently purchased from private owners. But within the Western National Forests,--where for 30 years timber has been used and kept productive under Federal management,--the number of game animals has increased 100 percent within the period 1921 to 1933. And this in face of an increase of more than 35,000,000 National Forest visitors--many of whom are hunters and fishermen."

The Forest Service recognizes wildlife as a major National Forest resource which it proposes to perpetuate through use, said Silcox. In a given area the plans for timber use must also take into consideration other uses. This policy the Forest Service follows by close cooperation and research work with other agencies interested in various phases of forest utilization. These include the Bureau of Biological Survey and many official and many private organizations in the States and in the Nation. He outlined "four major purposes in the wildlife program for the National Forests." First, the best development and use of wildlife as a valuable forest product. Second, recognition of "aesthetic, scientific, and other social purposes" as having first importance in control of wildlife. Third, the preservation of the privileges of the hunt on as broad lines as is feasible. Fourth--and growing out of the other three--education of the public to recognize wildlife values and to support conservation programs.

Closing his address to the Audubon audience Mr. Silcox said: "Now your organization--and others with similar interests and aims--are on the threshold of a new deal for America's wildlife. The prospects are bright. Let us capitalize on them, now. Tomorrow may be too late."